

World Rainforest Report.

July
1989



No.13

In this issue:

Last chance for the Penan

Samoa

SAMOAN RAINFORESTS:

CAN YOU HELP?

Paul Tait and Jeni Kendall, the film makers who made "Earth First" and "Blowpipes and Bulldozers" recently went to Western Samoa to cover the formation of a Rainforest Park on the island of Savai'i. The new National Rainforest Park was created to protect the forest that belongs to the village of Faleapo.

Dr. Paul Cox, an ethnobiologist from Provo University, Utah, USA, had been studying the flora and fauna of the forest for 5 years and found that the major pollinators of the forests were bats. One of these species, he discovered, was a rare non-nocturnal species unique to Samoa. There are perhaps only 500 of these bats left.

One day Dr. Cox heard bulldozers in the forest and was told by the Chiefs that they had been forced to sell their rainforests to a sawmill to pay for repairs to the village school. The repairs were necessary because the government refused to send any more teachers to the school unless they were carried out. Dr. Cox offered to raise the necessary money in America so that the forest could be saved. The Chiefs agreed and ran 5km through the forest to tell the dozer drivers they must stop. Six months later Dr. Cox returned with money for a new school and the Rainforest Park became a reality. It was agreed that the forest would be kept safe for 50 years...that no animals would be shot and timber would only be taken for traditional uses with traditional tools. The people of Falealupo would in return retain their landrights to their traditional forest.

Paul and Jeni then learnt that two other villages on Savai'i had been given the same ultimatum by the government and were planning to sell their forests as well. A third village which needed money to complete its hospital was also waiting to sign its forest over to the sawmill. The total cost of these projects was \$220,000, and the only way it could be raised was for the people to sell the forests that have supplied them with food, building materials, and clothes for the last 2,500 years.

Jeni and Paul, along with Dr. Thomas Elmmqvist, a Swedish colleague of Dr. Cox's made the same commitment that Dr. Cox had made in Falealupo. They have until the end of August 1989 to raise the necessary \$220,000. Already \$130,000 has been raised in Sweden

and the World Wildlife Fund has given funds for 3 years of study of *Pteropus Samoensis*, the rare pollinating bat that is now being considered for the endangered species list by the IUCN.

"The Samoans are wonderful people," writes Jeni Kendall, "So honest and generous and so we would like to help them to keep their forests intact and to be able to educate their children and care for their sick. Dr. Cox said something that really affected me, and that is that if you are to judge a people by how they respect their elders and children and look after their sick then look at the Samoans...family life is at the very core of

their existence and respect for tradition is all important. If you feel you could help us raise the money for the schools and hospital and in doing so save the rainforest, please send your donation to the Australian Conservation Foundation, 672B Glenferrie Rd., Hawthorn, Victoria. 3122. Mark your donation 'I would prefer this to be used for the Samoan Rainforest Park.' these donations are tax deductible.

We especially hope that school children here in Australia will want to help children in Samoa with classrooms for their education. In doing so our children will be directly saving the rainforest trees, plants and animals of Samoa."

PLEASE HELP IF YOU CAN. -JENI AND PAUL.



PENAN ACTION ALERT!

Increasing, intensive logging in Sarawak



This action alert was received and rushed to print just as WRR 13 was being prepared for publication. From time to time I read or hear of something that really brings home to me the horror of what we are doing to ourselves and the world we live in. This story does so as much as any I have seen. -Editor

It has become very clear that the productivity of the forests in the state of Sabah, East Malaysia are diminishing rapidly and that they have nearly reached their limit as productive resources of timber.

Three years ago, Japanese Monthly Tropical Timber News predicted that the productive value of the Sabah forests would be exhausted within three years.

Their prediction has become reality. During the period between January and April this year, the volume of timber exports has decreased by 44% while the value of these exports has decreased by 37% in

comparison with the same period in 1988.

The depletion of the Sabah forests has contributed to an increase of log exports from Sarawak, PNG, and the Solomon Islands to Japan. As of March 1989, exports from Sarawak have increased by 76%; and there has been a 140% increase from the Solomon Islands. These figures are based on the export volumes of these areas compared to those of March 1988.

In the near future, the forests of Sabah will be completely exhausted of any productive timber regions and the exports from Sarawak will double. The

Sarawak government guaranteed that they would be able to export 10 million cubic metres of logs to Japan each year for the next decade. Japanese timber traders assume that the area will be productive only for the next seven or eight years.



The increase in the timber trade will cause serious damage to the Sarawak forests and the welfare of the tribal peoples such as the Penan, Kayan and Kelabit. The Malaysian government has recently reported that the timber industry has become the top export earner, surpassing that of petroleum and oil, earning \$7.2 billion ringitt in 1988.

Recent new investments of Japanese timber industries in Sarawak:

In the past, there have been some joint venture logging companies in Sarawak. C. Itoh had Limbang Trading Co. in Ulu Limbang area. JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency, a government technical aid agency), and the Ex-Im Bank of Japan financed logging road construction in this area. JATAN investigated the situation and pointed out to the Diet a possible violation of the JICA Act. C. Itoh sold its share to local businessmen and closed operations in Limbang.

Mitsubishi Co. has been operating their subsidiary logging company, Daiya Malaysia, in Bintulu for the last fifteen years. Their area of operation is nearly depleted and they will

soon be searching for new sources of timber. Recently, Nissho Iwai announced their plan for investment in new areas, a joint venture with two new local concession owners. They will

invest 8 million US dollars in developing the upper Tataw River near Bintulu. Daily Timber Business News reveals that Nissho Iwai's investment will reach 20 million US dollars in the near future.

Tomen recently invested 100 million US dollars establishing a new sawmill company in the Kumana Industrial Complex.

Apart from the direct investment of Japanese trading companies, most of the logging operations are conducted by local companies, mostly Chinese, such as Limbunan Hidjau, Samling Timber, KTS, etc., and a number of their contractors.

Most of them have strong ties to huge Japanese traders such as Marubeni to Limbunan, and Nissho Iwai to Samling.

According to the SAM Marudi office, logging operations have become much more intensive - twenty-four hour operation, three shifts per day. Logging road and bridge construction has nearly reached the border of Kalimantan, Indonesia and logging operations continue to increase.

SARAWAK ACTION ALERT

The struggle to save the Penan people and their forests has reached a critical state. The latest information received from meetings with the last nomadic Penan of the Limbang, Mulu and Baram regions as well as with Bruno Manser has revealed that;

* There is only approx. ONE YEAR LEFT before the logging companies will have logged all of the Penan land. This is due

to the escalation of the logging in these areas to 24 hours per day in three shifts (a reaction to increasing international pressure on the Malaysian Government to stop logging these areas). Another major contributing factor is the imminent completion of a logging road which will completely enclose the last and best hunting and sago reserves of the Penan.

* There have been many REPORTS OF VIOLENCE against the Penan by some employees of the companies. The Penan are traditionally very peaceful people, avoiding confrontation of any kind, and are therefore very frightened by this violence and further threats against their wives and children. This is an attempt to keep the Penan from protesting or blockading.

* The Penan are preparing perhaps their LAST BIG BLOCKADE in about two to three weeks. Although frightened of the police and employees of the companies, their realization that their way of life will be over if they don't stop the companies soon has made them determined to bring their whole families to the blockade site. They want to go to jail for this way their wives and children will not starve whilst they are protesting. They also see this as the best way to attract worldwide attention to their struggle and will refuse to be released until such time as they can speak directly to the government and stop the companies from destroying their land. They do not want lawyers to help to release them if the logging still continues and express the desire for interpreters so that they can speak for themselves and understand the court proceedings.

* POLICE OPERATIONS, to prevent any outsiders meeting with the Penan and collecting documentation of their plight, have increased dramatically with a special task force from Peninsular Malaysia stationed throughout the area. Any tourist wishing to visit the areas close by must obtain special permits plus an interview with the Police before they are allowed in. They are also searching for Bruno Manser, using the disguise of Malaria volunteers, checking on every Penan community even those which are only accesable by foot.

* The Penan and the Kelabit communities have reported a RAPID DIMINISHING OF FOOD SUPPLIES due to logging. It is now very difficult to find food and the men must stay away hunting for many days to find wild boar or barking deer. We were able to give them money raised from a campaign in Australia to supply them with food during the blockades.

* BRUNO MANSER is alive and well despite rumours of his capture. His aid to the Penan is essential. They describe themselves constantly as children who don't know how to stop the companies from taking their land, they can hardly comprehend that their forests are almost gone. Only the fact that they hear the logging trucks and bulldozers day and night remind them that they have little time left. Bruno travels throughout the jungle talking to many different tribes and organising the best ways to stop the companies. He is now considering leaving the jungle after the blockades to tour the world with a Penan headman in an attempt to tell more people of the plight of the Penan. His plan will most likely be to alert international media to the day he will leave the jungle so that they can witness his arrest and again focus worldwide attention to the situation in Sarawak.

* WORLDWIDE ACTION IS ESSENTIAL to support the Penan and the Kelabits who will be blockading soon. The major importers of tropical timber from these forests are still the Japanese. They are also the major financiers of the logging roads which penetrate deep into Penan land. Increasing pressure must be placed on the government of Japan to stop this destruction. The Malaysian government must give the Penan people the rights to their own land and the few wealthy Malaysian individuals who hold the timber concessions must be stopped from exploiting these irreplaceable forests and the home of the Penan.

-From Friends of the Earth Japan
Sunday July 16 1989

Book Review.

PIRATES, SQUATTERS AND POACHERS

The Political Ecology of Dispossession of the Native Peoples of Sarawak by Marcus Colchester

A report from Survival International published in association with INSAN (The Institute of Social Analysis, Malaysia) Sun U Book Co., 1989

This book is one of a series of documents produced by Survival International aimed at focussing attention on the plight of indigenous peoples around the world struggling for their existence against rampant industrial expansionism and the genocidal policies of national governments. For this reason alone Survival International deserves support. (see address at end of article)

Possessing only a limited knowledge of the struggle of the Penan for their survival and that of their lands I found "Pirates, Squatters and Poachers" a stimulating source of background information.

Colchester explores a complex of interrelated issues; cultural, economic, ecological and historical, showing how the "development at all costs" regime fostered in colonial times continues to shape policies of the Malaysian government up to the present day. As the title suggests, Colchester's book is a critique of the political economy of eco-imperialism, the destruction of societies and the degradation of

the environment which proceed hand in hand with the capitalist pursuit of profit. In this sense there are numerous parallels which can be drawn with other colonial regimes around the world i.e., the exploitation of Africa, the destruction of Amerindians and the dispossession of Australian aboriginals.

It is the quality of research and its attention to Malaysian issues, the evolution of a centralised government, its economic policies, its pervasive political corruption which make this book an important contribution to the

understanding of the plight of indigenous people in the post colonial world. Indirectly Colchester shows the fundamental importance of land rights in the creation of an ethical and sustainable relationship with our environment. Unless we learn to value the knowledge of the earth and accept a similar custodianship as that which indigenous people have shown, there is likely to be no future for our species.

Deprived of economic power, unable to express their needs through a rigged electoral system, denied self management by an artificially imposed system of chieftains loyal to a governmental elite, the Dayaks have resorted to direct action to show their opposition to the expropriation of their land.

Unable to stop logging through legal channels, the Penan responded to this threat by blockading roads to sensitive forest areas. The Malaysian government has responded heavily handedly. The struggle has been well portrayed in the film, "Blowpipes and Bulldozers".

On a critical note my impression is that Colchester rather unfairly plays down the long history of resistance and independence which the indigenous people of Sarawak have shown throughout their contact with imperialist nations and against the policies of a corrupt central government. For instance, Iban pirates played havoc with loads of plunder bound for the coffers of Spain and later Holland and Britain. suffering from the scholasticism of documentary journalism I feel that this work fails to draw important lessons from the struggles of the Penan and other tribes in so far as these minority groups have effectively organised themselves and taken control of their lives by taking direct action. Surely this must inspire confidence in those of us living in "developed countries" fighting for a better world.

The bibliography, research notes, photographs and documentation are of a high standard and it is not difficult to read if, like me you find documentary reporting hard going. I suggest "Pirates, Squatters and Poachers" as an alternative reference source to be used in conjunction with Blowpipes and Bulldozers by activists trying to raise public awareness of the situation in Sarawak.

A HISTORY OF THE BLOCKADES

25.1.87 Penan communities of Sungei Tutoh and Sungei Limbang sign declaration of protest against logging. Tribes vow to stage blockade.

March.87 Long Napir Penan of Ulu Limbang start protest **12.5.87** Sarawak State Government declares that it has sole rights to the forest **16.5.87** Datuk Taib Mahmud, Sarawak Chief Minister and Forestry Minister says: "They (the natives) should be happy with what they have. Those who complain are greedy-they just want more money" (He is associated with and owns stock in companies having a total of over 1.6 million hectares **7.6.87** 13 leaders of the Kayan, Kenyah, Kelabit, Lun Bawang, Penan, and Iban communities of Barang Limbang and Lawas districts visit Kluang Lumpur, seat of the Malaysian national government. They meet and have talks with the Deputy and acting Prime Minister, Encik Ghafar Baba; Minister for Education; Minister for Primary Industries; Minister for Science, Technology and the Environment; Minister for Energy, Telecommunications; Deputy Minister for Works; the Member of Parliament for Baram Sarawak; the Inspector General of Police; The Police Commissioner for Sarawak. They are quoted in the pro-government "Peoples Mirror" (prop. James Wong) as "pledging support for government development programmes. They expressed dismay over the action of Penans who want to stop logging **July.87** The number of blockades on logging roads rises to 12 **3.7.87** Sarawak government creates a panel to "find out the needs of the Penan". Most of its members have timber interests **11.7.87** Sarawak Government pledges M\$1 million a year to the Penan if they agree to be placed under the government department for tribals (Orang Asli) and take part in Government resettlement scheme **28.7.87** 4 blockades are torn down. 4 men are bound over for 6 months for M\$1,000 **8.8.87** Armed police tear down barricades in Ulu Baram. They are reported to have threatened to call in replacements from Kuala Lumpur "who shoot with no questions asked" **Aug.87** 600,000 natives are reported to be suffering hardship. Penan are living on one meal of plain rice and tapioca a day **1.9.87** 5 Penan arrested on charge of burning bridges built by Samling Timber Co. They report beatings from the police **24.10.87** Government says that its patience is exhausted **31.10.87** Penan's main spokesman, Harrison N'Gau is arrested under the Internal Security Act and held for 2 months. 42 Kayan tribespeople arrested at Meradong, Beram. Police dropped by helicopters and armed with M16's pull down barricades

tribespeople arrested October 1987. Day declared an international day of protest There are over 140 actions around the world in solidarity. 40 are in Australia **29.11.88** 11 Penan arrested **10.12.88** 21 Penan arrested at Long Late. 12 charged under S.90(B) **22.1.89** 16 Penans arrested at Long Belok **15.1.89** 57 Penans arrested at Longs Iman, Lang, Belok, Late, Bangau, Kidah, Buang, Lellang and Batu Bangau **21.1.89** Further 24 Penan arrested. All January arrests are remanded in custody in Marudi jail for the maximum 2 weeks and refused bail for what are normally bailable offences. Sarawak Director of Forests Leo Chai said that they needed to be taught a lesson. **6.2.89** Last of the January arrests released on \$M1,000 bail each **24.4.89** Trial of the 42 Kayan arrested for blockading in October 1987. International protests including 40 in Australia for the day **25.4.89** All charges against the Kayan dropped. Kayan pledge to seek injunction against the logging. **11.5.89** New blockade by Kenyah Badang community of Long Gang, Ulu Belaga, in the seventh division to stop a timber company invading their land. No reports of arrests **13.5** **89** Seven people including a village headman arrested for a blockade at Kampung Kruisen, a village in Serian First division, Sarawak.

Nov.87 All remaining blockades dismantled. 22 in total. Government sets up State Penan Committee **25.11.87** Government passes Section 90(B) of the Forest Ordinance. New penalty for blocking timber road of 2 years imprisonment and M\$6,000 fine **3.2.88** Mission on "Native Rights and the Rainforest" meets James Wong (Minister for the Environment and Tourism). He tells them "Logging is good for the rainforest. Within 5 years the forest is barely distinguishable from virgin forest....I will not bow to the experts: I am the expert, I was here before experts were born." **6.2.88** 13 Penan longhouse chiefs meet in the SAM Marudi office. Their situation had worsened considerably. The chief of Long Layun reports "Our fruits, herbs and medicines, rattan, burial grounds-all are gone. If we are lucky, we may come upon food after walking and searching for three days." May 1987 150 Penan and Kelabits restart the blockades back in Ulu Limbang where the blockades started in March 1987 against WTK logging and Limbang Trading (Owned by James Wong) **17.9.88** Blockade across logging road at Long Abang **20.9.88** Blockade across road at Long Kawi **27.10.88** Long Leng Chief says that the timber contractor has bulldozed his longhouse's tapioca farms. The blockades spread again **31.10.88** Beginning of trials of 48

16.7.89 Logging stepped up to 24 hours a day. Penan's forest will all disappear in 12 months if present rates continue.

RAINFORESTS, THE GREENHOUSE MYTH, AND THE REAFFORESTATION FANTASY

The interrelation of rainforests and climate is exceedingly complex and is even less understood than the mechanisms of global climate. Whilst the vagaries of the weather have long had a major share of the headlines, no one climatic issue has ever received quite so much attention as the Greenhouse Effect.

It is now well known that the build up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is a major contributor to the Greenhouse Effect. It is also widely known that living plants absorb carbon dioxide as part of the photosynthetic process and convert the carbon into organic compounds whilst liberating the oxygen. It is therefore unsurprising that any article on the Greenhouse Effect will invariably mention plants, in particular trees, and especially the largest conglomerations of dense forest; tropical rainforest. Thus one magazine tells us that "trees are the main agents for absorbing carbon dioxide from the environment"¹.

Another tells us that "these vast Edens help us to regulate the atmosphere by storing carbon dioxide through photosynthesis"².

Those most eager to argue for the conservation of rainforests are only too ready to draw this link and to commit themselves further. A recent handout for the newly formed Rainforest Foundation in Australia claims that "The Amazon provides one quarter of the world's oxygen". Their media release makes no mention of species extinction. Instead it says repeatedly "we will save the oxygen supply for our children".³ To be fair, the Rainforest Information Centre makes claims of this nature in our publications too. One leaflet says "the rainforests act as the planet's lungs, cleaning the air, maintaining the CO₂/Oxygen balance".

Whilst it is indeed tempting to make such claims, the evidence suggests otherwise. Catherine Caufield, acknowledged to be one of the world's leading experts on rainforest says "it is a widespread myth that rainforests produce a large proportion of the earth's oxygen, that they are the green lungs of the planet. In fact, mature forests are in equilibrium. They consume as much oxygen as they produce through photosynthesis"⁴. Trees do indeed take CO₂ from the air and release oxygen, but only so long as they are alive and growing. As soon as they die, the timbers decay through the operation of bacteria, which break down the biomass and return the carbon to the air. In other

words, the amount of carbon entering the mature forest in CO₂ is equal to the amount leaving through decomposition. It is undoubtedly true that rainforests, such as the Amazon, do absorb vast quantities of carbon. It can also be argued that they are acting as lungs in that they do take CO₂ and convert it in a similar way to our own lungs. It is, however, arguable that they are net consumers of carbon, and very doubtful that they consume carbon on any scale sufficient to affect the Greenhouse Effect. To neglect to mention that they also produce correspondingly huge quantities of carbon dioxide is naive at best, and could be construed as a deliberate attempt to misinform.

THE REFORESTATION FANTASY

Unfortunately, the short-term perspective that regards forests as infinite carbon sponges has produced another great fallacy of the greenhouse debate - the reforestation fantasy. In brief this envisages the build up of atmospheric CO₂ being offset by vast plantations of fast growing trees.

Dr. Edward Linacre, one of the Australian experts on the Greenhouse Effect, acknowledges the grounds for defending rainforests. However he adds "from the point of view simply of the greenhouse effect, rainforests should be chopped down and replaced by fast growing Eucalypts, which are continually harvested." One doubts that all researchers have Dr. Linacre's awareness of their devil's advocacy, or sense of irony. I feel a chill when I read Robert McNeal of NASA saying "if only half the Amazon basin were covered with [plantation] forests it would absorb 20% of the carbon that is released into the atmosphere."⁶ The Amazon basin should be covered with mixed species rainforest alone.

Of course there are excellent reasons for growing trees. Reforestation is desperately needed in the tropics; 100 million ha. for soil conservation, 56 million ha. for fuelwood, 10 million ha. for timbering.⁷ We must also have a rapid increase in the availability of timber to satisfy growing demand in the short term, and to take pressure off the scant remaining primary forests as a source of

timber. We should learn from past experience and plant, as far as possible, mixed native species to try and replicate the naturally occurring native forests. These are, after all, adapted to local soils, climate, disease and pests.

These considerations scarcely enter into some of the plantation schemes that have been suggested. Greg Marland of the Oak Ridge Laboratories says that it would require a plantation of growing sycamores the size of Australia (around 7 million km²) to absorb given annual additions of 5 billion tons of carbon to the atmosphere (a considerable underestimate) ⁸. Who can possibly assess the impact that such a scheme would have?

As the World Resources Institute points out "we should not be seduced into thinking [reforestation] can solve the warming problem. It is, says Science, "a temporary solution at best" ⁹. Again the problem arises that, once established and mature, plantations would cease to be net consumers of carbon and would move into carbon cycle equilibrium. Thus they could buy us time and absorb part of our CO₂ imbalance but, once grown, they would be a huge, self sustaining carbon store. Any attempt to harvest or clear them would release that stored carbon back into the atmosphere unless their carbon stocks could be permanently removed from the carbon cycle. Myers suggests burying the trees or sinking them to the bottom of the ocean.

DEFORESTATION AND GREENHOUSE

However, rainforests should play a central role in the Greenhouse debate. Maintaining rainforests will not help the Greenhouse Effect, but the present rate of destroying them greatly accelerates its progress. A research article on the "contribution of global deforestation to the greenhouse effect", printed in Science, concluded that the importance of forest destruction "has been and remains much larger than has been commonly assumed."

In 1988 it was estimated that fires in Brazil alone produced 5 billion tons of CO₂ that year alone. They also produced 5 million tons of methane, and one million tons of nitrous oxide - both notorious Greenhouse gases. ¹⁰

None of these figures take into account the amount of logged timber that is destined to be burnt as wood product. Some of these, such as paper and marine plywood can have very

short lived use. What is more, fallen timber left in the forest encourages rapid increases in the population of termites, "vigorous methane producers", say the NCAR. ¹¹

Effects continue beyond logging and burning, decomposition in the forest soils will continue to produce CO₂, especially once exposed. Much of the cleared forest lands in Asia have been turned over to paddy fields, a major source of methane. Similarly the cattle used to graze cleared forest areas in Latin America are prodigious producers of CO₂ and Methane.

In conclusion then, we need to stress rainforest destruction as the second largest, and easily the most avoidable, contributor to the Greenhouse Effect. We must be careful to get our facts right.

Using false arguments is likely to reduce the credibility of the other reasons for saving the forests. We do, though, have to be cautious about reforestation schemes. If we could reforest areas of rainforest lost to clearing it would help reduce CO₂ levels in the short term. The main reasons, though, should be ecological. When the Greenhouse Effect starts to really take affect, mad monoculture plantation schemes might get a hearing, and this writer for one, has nightmares about the World Bank covering the globe with Sycamores and Eucalypts. This might, though, be the time to get a good hearing for desperately needed, environmentally sensitive, reforestation.

George Marshall.

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8. See 9.
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Australia

" Australia has the best greenie movement in the world and if the conservationists cannot save Australia, then the rest of the world does not have a ghost of a chance."

-Professor David Bellamy Oct. 1988

SO YOU THOUGHT AUSTRALIA'S RAINFOREST WAS SAFE

It is believed that the arrival of Aborigines over 40,000 years ago led to a dramatic increase in fires and the elimination of rainforests from a vast area of Australia. It has been estimated that 75% of Australia's surviving rainforests have been cleared since settlement by Europeans.

Today there is in the order of 3,300,000 hectares of rainforest remaining, of which around 1 million hectares is in a state of fire induced disclimax and is primarily dominated by Eucalypt and Brush Box (this is secondary rainforest). Australian rainforests can broadly be differentiated into four forms: temperate, sub-tropical, tropical and monsoon - spread over every state except South Australia.

Australia is considered to be one of the affluent/effluent nations within which there is not the urgent necessity to have to continue to devastate rainforests in order to achieve economic prosperity or repay foreign debts. In reality, Australia has used and abused its rainforest like most rainforested countries, and similarly, is continuing to do so. It is well past time that Australia halted the desecration of its few remnant rainforests.

Throughout Australia, rainforests are being eaten away by fire (primarily in the form of deliberately lit burn-offs) with many smaller stands being eliminated. The secondary (fire-disclimax) rainforests of South Eastern Australia (from Tasmania to southern Queensland) are being progressively degraded by intensive logging often entailing the removal of 90% of the canopy trees, and post logging burning to eliminate the rainforest understorey. The monsoon forests which occur over a wide area of northern Australia in lower rainfall regions (down to 500mm) are on the verge of extinction, primarily because of fire.

In Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, rainforest logging and clearing is still occurring - with no end in sight. Major dams projects involving the inundation of rainforests are planned for various areas on the east coast and in Tasmania. Domestic and

Kimberleys (Western Australia) and on Christmas Island are threatened by mining. The vast majority of Australia's remnant rainforests have already been degraded by logging. Of the primary rainforests in each state the percentage protected in parks and reserves is in the order of 23% in Tasmania and Victoria and 32% in N.S.W., while the majority of Queensland's wet tropical forests are encompassed by World Heritage listing. There are still unique rainforest subforms unrepresented in parks or reserves throughout their range.

It is obvious that Australia is not in the position to point the finger at any other country and tell them what to do about their rainforests. It already lags well behind some of them in protection efforts. It is time we got our own act together.

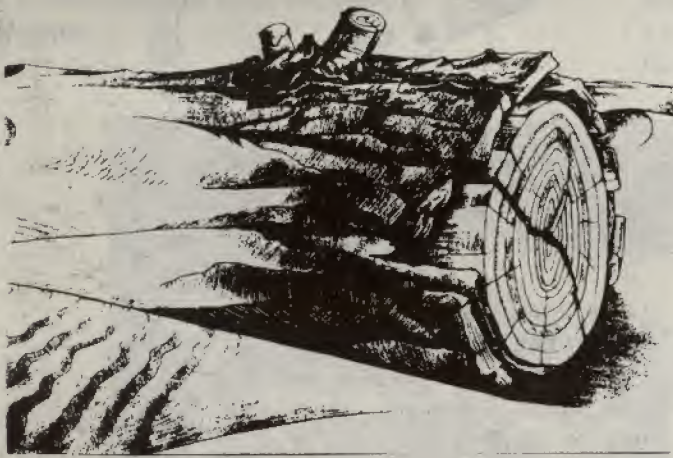
-Dailan Pugh

GREENING THE WORLD: A NEW TEACHING RESOURCE

A new teaching resource about trees has been produced for use in schools (Grade 1-7) by "World Neighbours", a programme of Community Aid Abroad in W.A. The project is designed to tie together material that is already available by providing information relating to recent environmental issues and looking at the global picture. There are sections on tree planting in India and Western Australia; art and craft, maths, reading and comprehension activities; and on tropical rainforests and their importance. Action ideas suggest things kids can do such as using re-usables rather than disposables and visiting hardware stores to find out what rainforest timbers are being sold. The main action focus is on raising funds to buy trees for a village in Maharastra in India. So as well as giving background it provides concrete ways for students to make a contributions to the environment, in line with the C.A.A. motto, "Our home is the World, Our neighbour is Everyone." Available from 935 Wellington St., W.Perth 6005 ph(09) 3215043

MOVES AFOOT TO BAN RAINFOREST TIMBER IMPORTS INTO AUSTRALIA

Senator Graham Richardson, Federal Minister for the Environment, speaking at a rally in Sydney to launch World Rainforest Survival Week on 24th April 1989 announced that he is awaiting the report of a consultancy on rainforest logging and its role in third world economies. He said "once I've got the information then I hope to come out with a submission that will enable us to stop importing rainforest timber absolutely." This is a tremendously exciting move for the rainforest conservation campaign. To date the only trade ban on rainforest timbers was in



July 1988, when the European Economic Community unanimously banned timber from Sarawak, Malaysia. The grounds for this ban were mainly humanitarian; the grounds for an Australian ban would be largely ecological, and thus the first of its kind. There can be no doubt as to the irreparable damage caused by tropical logging; around the world it accounts for the destruction of an area of rainforest the size of a football pitch every 4 seconds. In 1987, according to the Minister for Trade, Australia imported Aus\$92,952,124 of tropical timber, 80% of this was from Malaysia, notorious for the intensiveness of their logging operations, where logging removes 45% to 70% of the forest cover (S.C.Chin, University Malaya).

Attempts by tropical timber exporting countries to control and monitor their own logging have proved hopelessly inadequate. For example, in 1981, the official Philippines timber export figure to Japan were 365,441m³.

The official Japanese figure for imports from the Philippines in 1981 was 1,400,000m³. The difference is due to either corruption and piracy, or else deliberate manipulation of the figures.

Governments lack the resources to properly police logging and corruption often renders such environmental legislation as exists impotent in the face of a wealthy timber elite. Thus, at present, the best chance for preventing this form of rainforest destruction is for the developed countries, who consume the vast majority of the exported rainforest timber, to reconsider their role in this trade. The commitment of Senator Richardson will be sorely tried if the cabinet agrees to the import ban. The proposal faces two main problems. Firstly, timber exports constitute the second or third highest value export for the developing countries in the Asian region. At the rally he said "its our responsibility to show our concern for the people who are exporting [rainforest timbers]. In the end there are hungry people and they do need help...we must make sure that we can compensate those countries."

A compensation scheme may help stave off diplomatic pressure from producer countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, but, whilst worthy, will prove very expensive. In reality, the amount of the logging proceeds that actually trickles down to those who really need it is very limited under the logging concession system. What is more, the largest share of the profits from tropical timber is accrued by the developed Asian countries, such as Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea that process it into products such as doors, plywood and furniture. Herein lies the second major hurdle to the Richardson plan; there is, as yet, no suggestion that products made from or containing rainforest woods would be included in the import ban. If he fails to include them he will face fully justified criticism from Australian processing and manufacturing industries that use rainforest timbers. If he decides to include them, he would be pressured by developed Asian countries such as Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea whose products contain a high proportion of rainforest wood. On the minds of all of these lobbyists will be that although Australia is a relatively small consumer of rainforest

imports the greatest danger to the trade lies in the precedent that we set for larger consumers such as Europe, America, and Japan. Senator Richardson added "If you want to help, make sure you help me to convince not just other Australians but, in particular, our cabinet, in the very near future that we have to stop importing Rainforest timber." Please write now and offer your support to :-

Senator Graham Richardson,
Parliament House,
Canberra, ACT, 2600.

George Marshall.



SAVE ANTARCTICA'S RAINFORESTS

In order to avoid any accusations of presenting a one sided view of the rainforest controversy, the World Rainforest Report is printing the following account of a pro-logging demonstration in Sydney:

In Sydney yesterday, (10-4-89) fifty members of the Bare Earth Society welcomed a ship carrying rainforest timber from Sarawak. Society members carrying placards reading "Trees are dirty" and "asphalt is forever" called for a "world free of organic matter". The president of the society, Dr. Con Creet attacked the forests as the home of "creepy, crawly, slithering insects" and celebrated the logging of 16 hectares of rainforest during the few minutes for which he spoke. Society members then proceeded to hug a nearby concrete pillar.

Sydney Morning Herald, April 10 1989

THE FOLLOWING LETTERS WERE RECEIVED FROM KIDS IN A SCHOOL IN SYDNEY

TREES

Trees, trees, we need trees.
Hear them rustle in the breeze
Some companies cut them down fast
But soon they will be a thing of the past

Animals need them for their home
If they're not they'll have to roam
So save the trees SAVE THE TREES.



This grey cuscus, or large possum, was drawn by Kelly Gollan, 13.

TREES

If we cut down our trees
All animals will die
Some people say they don't
But that is a very big lie
And to cut down trees
We have to pay fees
But why pay fees
Just to cut down trees

Bees buzzing around the trees
I hope you forget your keys
Please do not destroy our trees



A platypus gets ready to take its baby for a swim. The drawing is by Amanda Hicks, 9.

"JUPITER ISLAND" BLOCKADED IN YARRA RIVER

In order to draw attention to Australia's role in rainforest destruction, the Melbourne Rainforest Action Group (RAG) has been conducting a nonviolent action campaign. The campaign includes all of the usual elements - research, negotiations, education, preparation, nonviolent action and an awareness of the need for protracted struggle.

Weekly meetings of RAG attract about 65 activists- compelling evidence of the growing concern about our global rainforest heritage. As part of the campaign a tremendous amount of time was devoted to organising a blockade of the Yarra River during the arrival of a rainforest timber ship. After months of planning it was decided to blockade the "Jupiter Island" which was carrying a cargo of rainforest timber from Malaysia, 2500 cubic metres of which was to be delivered to Melbourne.

Although many of the RAG activists are relatively new campaigners, the group committed itself to an action based on the principles and dynamics of nonviolent politics. Consequently, for instance, the planning was all done openly with everyone involved; there was no hierarchy and no secrecy. In addition, the public, media, police and our opponents were all informed of our intentions well in advance.

Many activists engaged in the river action had undertaken some nonviolent action training (including a role-play) prior to the blockade. Further opportunities to learn more about nonviolent politics are offered regularly.

We also liaised with the Waterside Federation (WWF) and the Seaman's Union seeking union support for our action. Robert Larkins, Catherine South, Joanna Sender and Hans Foik liaised with the police and port



Rainforest Activists prepare to blockade the "Jupiter Island" in the Yarra River.

As part of our preparation, three rainforest timber ships - the "Tai Yang" in December 1988, the Pacific Swan in January 1989 and the "Kabite" in February - were closely monitored by Rag members in order to gain a clear understanding of ship movements and cargoes. Alex Perry took slides of the ships and timber as part of our research effort. This enhanced our careful planning considerably.

authorities keeping them fully informed of our intentions. We also had other collectives and individuals liaising with the media, Malaysian activists and environmental groups. Fiona McDonald and Tracy Neilsen organised the telephone tree and other activists such as Kerry Seaton co-ordinated the nonviolent peace keeping team (in case it was necessary to deal with provocateurs).

"JUPITER ISLAND" BLOCKADED IN YARRA RIVER cont'd

THE ACTIONS After five months of careful planning, at 10pm on 13 April 1989, members of RAG blockaded the Yarra River during the arrival of the "Jupiter Island".

Once we got final confirmation of the ship's exact arrival time, the telephone tree branches were alerted; this was 30 hours before the ship was due. On arrival at the site all activists and the media were handed a 3 paragraph statement by Ayse Alpindar, Chick Perrin and Alex Perry which outlined the disciplined, nonviolent nature of the action and asked everyone to respect it. Cars were parked at the river edge so that their headlights could be used to illuminate the river when the ship arrived. Long time rainforest activists Charley Daniel and Norman Keegel spoke at our media conference. We then gathered all of the water activists into a circle enclosed by the big circle so that we could check our gear - we had previously agreed that all of those going into the water would wear wetsuits for safety and visibility, as well as flippers for mobility. We then put on our caps, checked our torches, selected a buddy (for safety) and did an accurate and final head count.

The swimmers, lifesavers, surfers and kayakers then moved down to the water's edge and spread out along the river. The police warned us we would be arrested, if we went more than 25 the river edge! Everyone in the water had been carefully briefed about the legal consequences of their action by barrister Rob Larkins; each was willing to risk arrest. Once the ship was in sight under the West Gate Bridge, we fanned out across the river and virtually surrounded the ship with several people having a friendly contest to hold the bow. The 3 police launches and the zodiac were not sufficient to contain us all so most of their efforts were designed to shepherd us away from the ship. Although some activists were picked up and removed, no one was arrested.

After the action, several activists including Andrew Dyall, Wendy Orams and Thomas Rohan were interviewed by reporters. Their enjoyment, commitment and messages were conveyed widely through the media. We then formed a circle on the grassy verge to share our excitement.

There were over 200 people at the river that night, and 46 of them went into the water. Catherine South video taped the action to ensure it became part of the historical record.

The action was given reasonable press coverage - despite the difficulty of getting good photographs at night- and very good television coverage. It was shown on TV in London.

Feedback since the night has confirmed the tremendous feeling, power and impact of the action. The activists had a superb time: the action was fun, involving and empowering. The word has gone out that it was a great action to be involved in and more activists can be expected next time subject to reasonable notice.

In important ways, the power of our various opponents was clearly undermined; this is evident for example in the responses of the public, the unions and the police. There is now less public support for rainforest logging and a higher level of concern about the plight of forest peoples: many members of the public (through our regular stalls) have indicated that they will now boycott rainforest timbers. Union opposition to rainforest destruction has been hardened and police willingness to thwart our blockades is less than enthusiastic. We have received messages of support from several new sources. And evidence of the sensitivity of vested interests is provided by the fact that it is proving more difficult to get information about the next timber ship!

RAINFOREST TIMBER SHIPS BLOCKADED AND PAINTED

Following the blockade of the "Jupiter Island" in April, the Melbourne RAG spent several weeks keenly awaiting the arrival of another rainforest timber ship. Eventually, Danny Hirschfeld of Sydney RAG advised us of the date of arrival of the "Pacific Lover".

The "Pacific Lover" arrived in Port Phillip Bay on 19 May, but because of publicity about the intended blockade, a 24 hour loading ban imposed by the WWF and the inability of the stevedoring company to provide labour, the ship hung at anchor for 5 days. Melbourne RAG maintained a constant vigil to ensure the ship did not sneak in "unwelcomed".

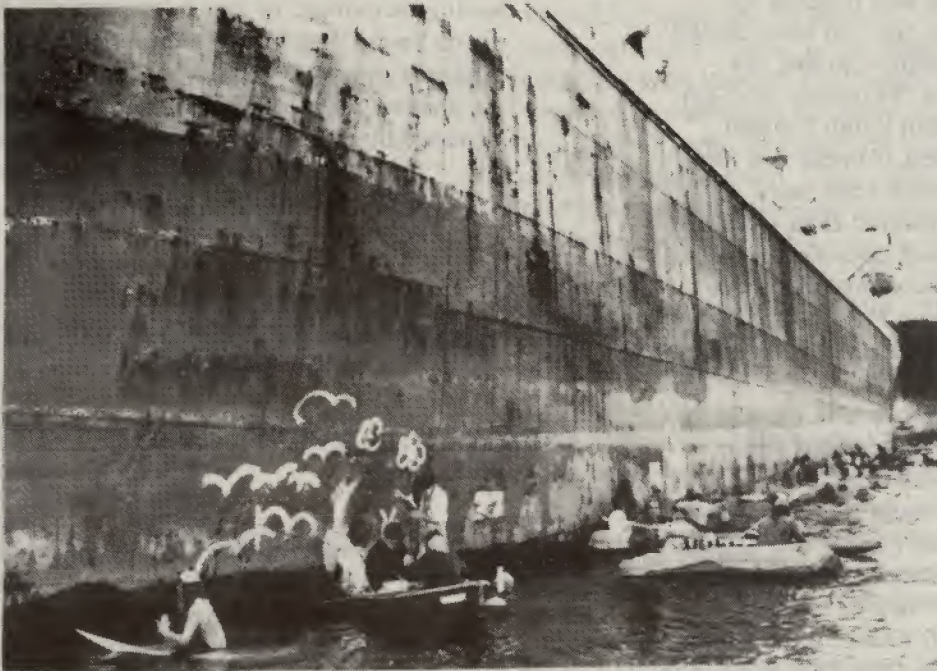
On 24 May the "Pacific Lover" finally came into the Yarra River. We were told at 12:10pm that the ship was due at 3:30pm. Despite the short notice, RAG managed to mobilise 90 people at the riverside, 33 of whom went into the water to blockade.

RAINFOREST TIMBER SHIPS BLOCKADED AND PAINTED (Cont'd)

Two days later the "Krasnogorsk" came in at 4am - two hours earlier than the mobilisation time of 6am. However, the 200 RAG members who gathered at the river were content with the knowledge that the ship had gone to considerable trouble to beat the blockade. The group celebrated by travelling in convoy to Appleton Dock to negotiate the imposition of a 24 hour unloading ban by the WWF. The union, solid in its support for the rainforests and tribal people of Sarawak, immediately imposed its third successive ban!

spent an hour painting a rainforest mural along the length of the ship while the media, police, port authorities and waterside workers watched from various vantage points.

After 55 minutes of negotiation, the waterside workers agreed to hang our giant banner "Boycott Rainforest Timbers" from the side of the ship. Watching the banner hauled up the side of the ship - as the group cheered - was a fitting climax to the afternoon's "paint job". In each of the above actions, RAG members have displayed a high level of nonviolent discipline. This discipline, coupled with our complete openness and a high level of communication with the police, port security authorities, the shipping agent and other interested parties, has no doubt been a



2. Nonviolent activists start painting a rainforest mural on the "Krasnogorsk".
(Photo: Neil Newitt of "The Age" Melbourne.)

At the early morning meeting RAG members also decided to paint a rainforest scene along the side of the ship on the following Sunday. Later that morning, the ship's agent, the police, port security authorities and the media were all informed of our intentions. Port security personnel agreed to confirm that our paint was water based and bio-degradable so that it would not pollute the river. After 2 days of preparation, 150 activists mobilised at the river to plant trees and paint murals. This time 40 activists paddled more than a kilometre to the "Krasnogorsk" and

significant factor in the police decision to make no arrests so far.

All actions and the consumer boycott message have received excellent media coverage throughout Australia. In addition, the "Pacific Lover" blockade was reported on "Radio Australia".

Activists in Malaysia have been kept informed of these solidarity actions throughout the campaign.

-Robert J. Burrowes June 1989

World Roundup.

RAINFOREST CYCLISTS REACH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The three monstrously dedicated rainforest activists who set off last March on a bicycle ride across equatorial Africa "a Ride for the Rainforest along 3600 miles of unmaintained dirt roads" have reported in after the first leg of their extraordinary journey.

According to a letter sent to their Stateside liaison, after two months and roughly 900 miles of steady pedaling the trio has reached the Central African Republic. So far, say Nelson Hoffman, Tempie Thompson, and Zvi Cohen "the going has been tough Zvi and Nelson contracted malaria, Tempie has foot worms" and the rainforest is both more beautiful and more devastated than what any of the riders had imagined possible. In fact, they've seen deforestation along the entire route thus far. According to Nelson, people simply have no idea what they're doing, "and don't have a thought about it."

And so, although the riders are in the saddle almost every day, they've adjusted their schedule to allow plenty of time for presentations at local schools and clubs. Both Nelson and Tempie speak French (the CAR is a former French colony), and the trio has been well received wherever they've stopped. The team hopes to reach Ksangani, Zaire, the first week of June. They're trying to raise funds to help African rainforest groups set up critically needed local-education programs. To make a donation, contact Charles Hoffman, 32 Parkway Road, Brookline, MA 02146; (617) 241-9726. n

-THE NORTHERN STAR MARCH 1989



THE POPE KNOWS

Pope John Paul during a three day visit to Madagascar in March this year appealed for the rescue of threatened forests.

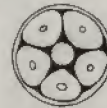
"It is urgent that the international community become the master of legal and technical means to guarantee the protection of the environment."

Tropical forests are dwindling in large parts of Africa and South America, and Madagascar has seen half of its forests disappear due to extensive logging over the past 20 years.

-The Northern Star March 1989

BUY A MAZDA: KILL A TREE

Thinking about buying a new car or stereo? You might want to think twice about anything bearing the names "Mazda" or "Mitsubishi". According to the Japan Timber Importers Association, Itoh & Company and the Sumitomo Company (codistributors of Mazda cars) and the Mitsubishi Corporation (producers of everything from cars to electronics to consumer loans) are among the leading importers of logs from Sarawak, home of the Penan and Kayan tribespeople. The Japanese import 80 percent of Sarawak logs. At present rates, the Malaysian state will be denuded by 1992.



APOLOGY

In World Rainforest Report 11 (Spring 1989) Professor Paul Crutzen, Director of the Max-Planck-Institute for Chemistry in West Germany was erroneously quoted as having made the following statement: "One of the main causes of ozone destruction is these enormous fires, not just in Brazil, but in Africa."

The World Rainforest Report apologises to Professor Crutzen for having made this error. In his letter to us about this matter, Professor Crutzen makes the following statement: "This quotation has been copied by other organisations as well and has appeared in the press prior to your publication (so no blame to you). However, I must tell you that I have never made a statement of this kind, that I was never interviewed about the connection between tropical deforestation and ozone loss, and that the statement is ridiculous. Some journalist made it up. Tropical deforestation is a serious problem and should be prevented. For this one does not need improper scientific connections and indecent reporting."

World Roundup.

DUTCH TROPICAL RAINFOREST CAMPAIGN SUCCESSFUL

Within 6 months of its initiation, the Dutch tropical timbers campaign has succeeded in getting 40% of Dutch municipalities to reduce their use of tropical timber and another 26% will take the same decision within a few months.

The Dutch tropical rainforest campaign aims to reach a 50% reduction in tropical timber demand within one year and to promote (inter)national measures for sustainable forestry. More than 300 local groups are now involved in the campaign. Besides municipalities regional governments, housing corporations, architects and construction firms have also decided to promote alternatives and reduce tropical timber use. More than 45,000 citizens have signed the international petition (published by 'The Ecologist') calling for an emergency plan to save tropical rainforests by the United Nations. At the moment 1000 signatures to Friends of the Earth in Holland.

According to Herman Verhagen, these campaign results are an impressive political signal towards Dutch national government and those involved in commercial logging and tropical timber trade. "Dutch per capita tropical timber consumption is among the highest in the world, second only to Japan. Every year 43.000 hectares tropical rainforest are being destroyed just to satisfy Dutch tropical timber demand."

(Note: in the Netherlands 60-80% of tropical timber is used in the construction sector - window frames, doors and such- and municipalities are among the most important principals in building programmes, especially housing.)

For information : Herman Verhagen, FOE-Holland (tel. 31-20-221366)

A REPORT FROM THE WORLD RAINFOREST MOVEMENT MEETING

In April, representatives from environmental groups in thirteen countries gathered in Penang to discuss strategies for the World Rainforest Movement. Martin Khor of Malaysia's Third World Network set the tone for the four-day meeting with an opening statement that called for NGOs around the world to work together to challenge the prevailing belief that Third World countries are to blame for tropical deforestation. Khor called on all rainforest groups to present a united front in opposing programs advocated by the UN Development Program and the international banking community that would continue the disastrous policies of the past under a new rubric of "sustainable development."

He cited such false solutions as the Tropical Forest Action Plan developed by the World Resources Institute, the United Nations Development Program, and the World Bank as little more than ciphers for the continued use of the Third World as a source of raw materials and a market for manufactured goods.

Representatives from Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia echoed Khor's thesis, challenging the idea that tribal people and rural farmers are at the heart of the current deforestation crisis. Rather, they argued, the rainforests are being plundered to feed a rapidly growing northern hemisphere economy.

Campaigns against Scott Paper, Georgia Pacific, and Mitsubishi were planned, as well as a New York press conference to present to the UN a petition calling for an emergency session on global deforestation. The petition, initiated by Britain's The Ecologist journal, has amassed over one million signatures.

-Mike Roselle



Debt for Nature

WWF SIGNS ECUADOR'S LARGEST DEBT-FOR-NATURE AGREEMENT



World Wide Fund For Nature today signed an agreement to purchase approximately US \$5.4 million of Ecuador's outstanding commercial debt to support conservation efforts in that country.

Approximately US\$3 MILLION face value of the debt purchased will be dedicated to conservation work in the Galapagos, where WWF has been involved in conserving the islands' unique species and ecosystems since 1961. The remaining proceeds will be used by Fundación Natura, WWF's Associate and one of the country's leading private conservation organizations, to strengthen the existing parks and reserves on the mainland, identify and establish new protected areas, and support training programs.

Today's agreement is the second step in a US\$10 million programme WWF negotiated with Ecuador in 1987. WWF acquired the first US\$1 million of Ecuadorian debt in early 1988. The latest agreement is in collaboration with another US non-governmental organization, The Nature Conservancy, which has agreed to purchase the remaining US\$3.6 million.

"The debt-for-nature swap is an example of the way organizations like WWF are utilizing innovative financing mechanisms to leverage the impact of their assistance to conservation efforts in developing countries," said Kathryn S. Fuller, of WWF.

The commercial bank debt will be converted by the Ecuador Central Bank authorities into local currency bonds which will mature in nine years. Interest in these bonds will be distributed among various conservation projects in western Ecuador, the Amazon and the Galapagos Islands.

Ecuador is one of the most biologically rich countries in the world with habitats ranging from the Galapagos Islands to Amazonian rainforests, coastal savannah and mangrove forests, and Andean highlands. These habitats support more than 1,400 species of birds, and perhaps as many as 20,000 species of plants. The Ecuadorian Andes provide one of the last strongholds for the highly

endangered spectacled bear - South America's only native bear.

WWF, founded 28 years ago, is the world's largest private conservation organizations. Its international headquarters are in Switzerland, and it has 27 Affiliate and Associate organizations on all continents.

WWF's aim is to conserve the natural environment and ecological processes essential to life on earth. WWF continues to be known as World Wildlife Fund in Australia, Canada and the United States of America.

for more info. contact: Leigh Ann Hurt, WWF-US (+1-202) 778 9510S.



UPDATE

The World Bank

AND ITS MDB FRIENDS

by Carol Sherman.

Some progress has been made regarding environmental reforms in the World Bank and other development banks but the whole picture is still extremely grim. In over a hundred developing countries the Multinational Development Banks (MDB's) are the single most important institutions financing and influencing activities and policies that affect the fate of tropical forests, energy policy and fossil fuel emissions, but they are still largely avoiding any serious effort to incorporate into their decision making the global environmental effects of their policies and projects.

It is now two years since the World Bank announced sweeping environmental reforms. However, progress has been hampered by deep seated institutional problems and not much has changed. The focus has been on preparing studies and reports that don't change the bank's operations. The environmental assessment units have not been given a sufficient budget or authority to assure essential ecological design changes in projects.

SOME POSITIVE CHANGES AT THE WORLD BANK.

In Brazil, after unprecedented international controversy and pressure, the Bank is tabling its proposed Second Power Sector Loan and is preparing in its place a \$300 million "Environmental Reform and Energy Conservation" loan to the power sector. It is too early to tell whether this new loan will involve a fundamental redesign of the power sector investment plan which calls for the construction of 136 dams by the year 2010, of which 79 will be in the Amazon rainforest.

In India the Bank has shown a willingness in some areas to cancel or withdraw from projects where there have been continual and flagrant violations of Bank loan conditions and policy guidelines. After years of controversy at a coal fired electric generating plant and coal mine in the Singrauli region the Bank is preparing a National Environmental Rehabilitation Loan which will redress not only the resettlement and environmental problems but also massive environmental and social disruption in the whole region, where there are a dozen open pit coal mines and five giant coal fired generating plants.



ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DEBACLES CONTINUE.

The World Bank now has some exemplary policies concerning the environment, protection of wildlands, forced resettlement, treatment of tribal people, etc. However, unless they are implemented they are worthless pieces of rhetoric. Problems abound in Brazil, India and Indonesia where World Bank financing continues to create social and ecological havoc. Three of its lending programmes in Brazil, - Polonoroeste, the Carajas Iron Ore Mine and Railroad project and lending to the Brazilian Electric Power Sector - facilitate tropical deforestation and destruction of the livelihoods of indigenous peoples on a massive scale. In already approved projects, the Bank is not ensuring that environmental and Indian lands protection conditions are complied with. Supervision and monitoring of these activities has decreased through lack of staff and resources for the job, while local NGO's and organizations representing indigenous and local people are still being denied access to information. In Polonoroeste the story is similar.

The Bank has still not cancelled or even called for a suspension of loans for the Sardar Sarovar dam in India although the 3 Indian state governments concerned have blatantly disregarded conditions and guidelines concerning the resettlement of 80,000 rural poor

STATEMENT TO REBUT SUSTAINED YIELD ARGUMENTS BY FORESTRY IN N. QUEENSLAND TROPICAL RAINFOREST

Professor Duncan Poore's report on the feasibility of sustainable wood production by modern tropical forest management ("Tropical Timbers" Dec. 1988) was admittedly a "depressing shock" to the international timber trade (ITTO) who commissioned it. Poore concluded, in a word, that the extent of successful sustainable operations is "on a world scale, negligible". Poore's exhaustive overview (with three regional consultants) confirmed the gap between logging theory and practice i.e., in reconciling economic expediency and biological sustainability, already accepted by forestry authorities such as Schmidt, Mergen, Leslie and others. In what seems to have been regarded as a disappointing search, resulting in an unrealistically long list of recommendations not in tune with the economic urgency, Poore identified only four instances considered by "Tropical Timbers" as a "shining light" in the murky world of tropical forest exploitation. These examples of "practical sustained yield management in day-to-day operations" were: Trinidad and Tobago (not significant in export trade, however); Ghana (only partial operation of required systems); Malaysia (the "most encouraging ... theoretical system" now in full use, so that a few companies were "reasonably successful" in sustained yield work); and Queensland ("its entire 160,000 ha of commercial forest under strong management" until designated a potential World Heritage Site). Given the global decline of forests for a wide variety of reasons, and the emergence of wide national movements against tropical

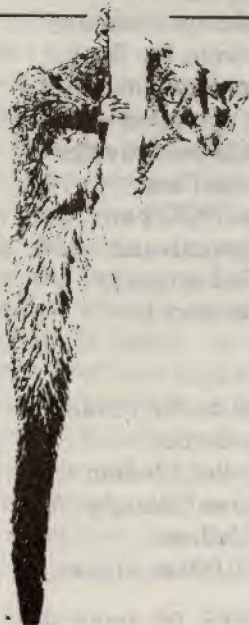
deforestation, these "negligible" examples of sustained yield are as ludicrous as they are misleading. While poised to continue the destruction of virgin forest ecosystems in the usual uncontrolled forms of selection logging necessary for short term profit, tropical timber companies try to justify themselves by selection of rare scientific authority.

Under ideal conditions in space and time, timber production may be technically and theoretically possible (e.g., by modelling) on a sustained yield basis from a suitably large area of natural tropical rainforest.

THE FACT REMAINS: NOWHERE IN THE MOIST TROPICS HAVE POLYCYCLIC LOGGING SYSTEMS FUNCTIONED SUCCESSFULLY OVER A WIDE AREA OF FOREST TYPES AND OVER SEVERAL CUTTING CYCLES i.e., OVER AT LEAST A HUNDRED YEARS.

Given the absence of any systematic attempts over sufficiently long periods of time by forestry authorities to study and establish not only sustained yields of tropical hardwoods, but also of the total spectrum of natural rainforest values, tangible and intangible, I therefore consider that the preservation of the total tropical rainforest region is in principle non-negotiable. NO evidence has been offered by forestry of the timber industry for the sustainability of all values of the forest.

L.J. Webb, A.O. Honorary Professor Division of Australian Environmental Studies Griffith University, Brisbane. (21.2.1989)



Professor Webb has produced the above not as a definitive statement but as a draft for discussion and would welcome any response on this matter, with a view to organising a down-to-earth workshop in the future, with foresters participating!



Letters

HONDURAS

Roy Simpson is working on a project to create a National Park in Honduras. What follows is part of a letter he wrote earlier this year describing his work.

"...My work here in a nutshell is to create a national park. But as so often happens in developing countries, it's a big project with few resources. Right now, all that exists is a declaration from Congress and some boundaries on a map that is 40 years old, and one might be inclined to ask, what next? So I've got my work cut out for me. My park is called Parque Nacional Pico Pijol. It is located in the north central part of Honduras in the Yoro mountains. Its highest peak, Pico Pijol, is 2,296 metres high and covered by what we call cloud forest. Pico Pijol in some ways is lucky as the north side is very steep and therefore hasn't been cut up too badly above 400 metres. The other side however is being clear-cut up to 1800 metres and is being rapidly destroyed." The forest has an array of animals including 3 types of monkeys and supposedly the largest populations of Quetzals, toucans, tapirs and possibly a type of tiger or panther and myriad other species."

Roy goes on to talk about the problems he faces: "-There is no form of protection. Only a law exists with no enforcement at all. For this reason, people are busily cutting away forests for coffee and killing/capturing animals.- There is very little government support. No one agency exists like 'a park service' and the responsibility is split between various agencies often couldn't care less.-There's a definite lack of funds and workers.

There are more problems to overcome but I'll only give you a brief picture here.

Pico Pijol is one of 37 preserves here in Honduras. The others range from parks to reserves and sanctuaries. To date I believe about 17 of them have Peace Corps volunteers working in them. Unfortunately however Honduran parks are the least protected in Central America."



Dear Madam/Sir,

Just read your Report No. 12 with the article about banning logging in Thailand. For your information, the Dominican Republic has banned all logging for years, in order to save its forests from the same fate as those of neighbouring Haiti. The Dominican Republic has little forest left outside of the Duarte

National forest (or Park) around Pico Duarte, the highest point in the country. They also placed the forestry department under the military for stricter enforcement. One interesting side-effect of this ban is that small farmers eliminate tree seedlings on their property because if they permit them to grow into trees, cutting them will require a lot of red tape or stiff fines. Very sincerely,

Harvey. P. Newton

Soil scientist Costa Rica



MEXICO

What follows is part of a letter received from Daniel Ramont at the Na-Bolom Centre in Mexico. For further information Daniel's address is: Av. Vicente Guerrero No. 33 San Cristobal de Las Casas Chiapas, Mexico, 29220

Your work informing the world on rainforest destruction should be commended. From the Yanomami in Brazil to the Penan in Sarawak. Your newsletter is a source of vital importance, as it pools together recent events on the rainforest. Like many other environmental reports, yours describes in detail the situation in the Amazon. As a result, a large portion of the world's population is aware of this serious problem. We at Na-Bolom would like to see coverage of the destruction of the Lacandon jungle, in Chiapas, Mexico. The story of the tragic situation in the Selva Lacondona has been overshadowed by that of Brazil's. It has been calculated, that close to 12% of the Amazonian forest has been destroyed. Over 80% of the Selva Lacondona has been destroyed. This tropical rainforest located in southern Chiapas, was considered to be the largest rainforest north of the Amazon. From a cultural perspective this selva is important because it is home to approximately 500 Lacandon Maya. The Lacandon were one of the

continue overleaf... 21

Letters (continued)

very few Mayan groups to escape the Spanish conquest. Thus they have succeeded in preserving their culture to this date. Since the 1940's their culture has been threatened by the presence of hundreds of indian and mestizo peasants who have migrated from the highlands to the lowlands in search of farmland.

The soil in the tropical forest is only capable of sustaining crops for 3-4 years. These immigrants (consisting of Chol and Tzeltal speaking Maya) apply their farming methods from the highlands. As a result they are not very successful in agriculture. They in turn move further into the forest destroying more trees and forcing the Lacandon to move closer together in a community type setting. They used to live spread out in the forest, isolated from the outside world. The fact that they lived in this manner prevented the rampant spread of diseases. But as they are living closer the spread of diseases has been facilitated. One cannot help but think back to the days when the Spanish wiped out thousands upon thousands of Mayans through diseases from the new world, relocation and raids.

LUMBER & CATTLE INDUSTRY MOVE IN

In the early 1970's, the Mexican government began limiting the number of immigrants into the area. It was brought to their attention that there were precious hardwoods that the farmers were wasting in order to plant crops. A heavy profit could be made by the sale of mahogany and cedar. Thus the government began building roads to transport lumber. These roads have resulted in the acculturation of hundreds of Lacandon. The cattle industry soon got wind of the cheap land available in the jungle and began buying it from the farmers. This industry has played a big hand in preventing regrowth.

Between the immigrant farmers, the lumber industry and the cattle industry over half the Selva Lacandon has been decimated. I was told by a Canadian ecologist that if the current rate of destruction continues, within the next 10-15 years Mexico will no longer have a rainy season. The effect this will have on Mexico's food supply will be devastating. We are counting on your organisation and others like it to publicise the situation in the jungles of Chiapas. Like Brazil, Mexico needs not only external pressures, but resolutions to their ecological problems.

Philippines

The Haribon Foundation is continuing its brave campaign to protect the island province of Palawan from destructive logging, mining and fishing practices. On May 20th this year a local Haribon chapter was inaugurated in Palawan. Already it has over 200 members. In a counter move the major logging magnate on the island, Jose Alvarez, has filed a 5 million peso suit against Haribon for allegedly incorrect statements about the activities of his companies. Meanwhile, over 2000 signatures have been collected in Australia and internationally by the R.I.C. in its petition to support Haribon's Palawan campaign. (All completed petitions should be returned to the R.I.C. by November.) Haribon and other concerned groups will be bringing the issue of the country's forest destruction to the United Nations in February 1990.



CAMPAIGN TO SAVE MT. APO

Elsewhere in the Philippines, on the island of Mindanao, a broad coalition of tribal groups, environmentalists and cause-oriented groups are struggling to save Mount Apo, the highest peak in the Philippines. Now declared a National Park and a Asean Heritage Site, the dense rainforest of Mt. Apo is the home and holy land of thousands of tribal Filipinos. The Philippines National Oil Corporation (PNOC) has plans for 3 geothermal plants within the area. They have already drilled 2 wells and plan to drill 170 more. The tribal people have been brutally displaced resulting in massive starvation and social upheaval. The military have even resorted to torture and murder as they try to crush opposition to the geothermal plants. This is yet another "development" project which could not go ahead without World Bank funds. Letters of protest can be sent to: Australia's Director to the World Bank, Robert Carling, The World Bank, 1818 H Street NW Washington DC 20433 USA Campaign funds for the tribal groups of Mt. Apo can be channelled through the R.I.C. with absolutely no money being skimmed off for administrative expenses.

Indonesia

SUHARTO'S LATEST BUDGET IS BAD NEWS FOR IRIAN JAYA'S FOREST

On January 7 1989, President Suharto delivered the 1989/90 annual budget. He boasted that his government would increase the national income to \$US 22.8 billion (36.5 trillion rupiah), which includes the new \$US 8 billion overseas loan. Compared to last year's budget, these figures show an increase of 26.3%.

Furthermore, he intends increasing the general annual expenditure to \$ 14.8 billion to raise the salaries of active and non-active public servants and military personnel. \$ 8 billion will go to other project development schemes.

The figures above show quite clearly that the Indonesian government has committed itself to great expenditure while the oil price remains uncertain. It is important to note that the 1989/90 budget is the starting point for the fifth and latest of Suharto's five year economic development schemes. It is known as Repelita V.

Obviously, then, this Repelita V is a most crucial project which will determine the success or failure of Suharto's economic development schemes. In reality the economic conditions indicate slow growth due to the world oil price slump and other economic factors. The debt service ratio, exacerbated by world currency movements has risen in 1989 to around 40%. Public debt service obligations are absorbing around 50% of domestic revenue, placing heavy reliance on foreign aid to keep up development investment.

Nevertheless, in order to fulfil its goal the government will concentrate on two major issues. First, it will continue its commitment to deregulation and introducing debureaucratization to attract more foreign investors. Secondly, the government will increase non-oil exports.

However, the success of the country's 59% non-oil export is in doubt. This is due to the rudimentary Indonesian technology involved and the world market competition: Tea, coffee, palm oil, tobacco, and copra as export commodities are limited by international quotas. Textile production is facing tariff protection. Rubber and raw prawn production confronted by severe competition too.

Beyond any doubt, therefore, the Indonesian government will rely heavily on timber production as an export commodity to gain most of the increased foreign exchange.

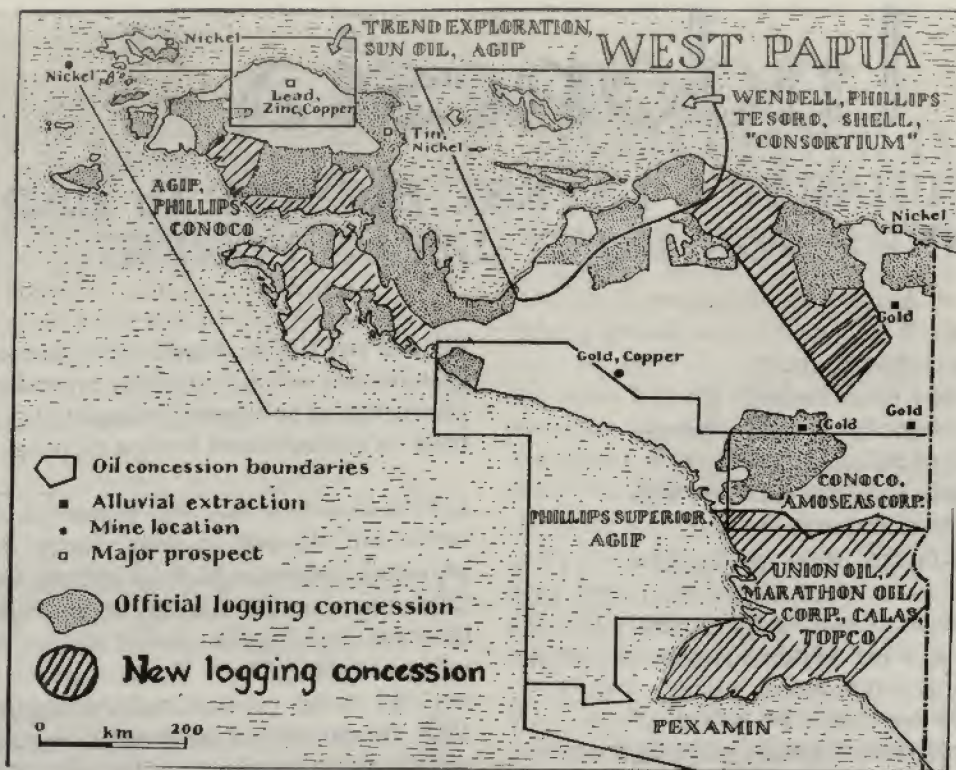
In 1986 Indonesia was able to provide the world with 4.6 million cubic metres of plywood, valued at \$US 1.5 billion. The following year the total plywood production increased to 6.3 million cubic metres with a value of \$US 2 billion. There is no clear data on 1988 timber production, but in September 17 1988, Tempo (one of Indonesia's respected weekly magazines) wrote that plywood earned the biggest foreign exchange out of all Indonesian export commodities.

With Indonesia's booming timber industry, the government's aim for 1989 is to further increase the logging concession area to 62 million hectares. Having already worked out the forest of Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi, the next and final area is Irian Jaya (western part of New Guinea). According to reliable sources, indication are that several plywood companies in Kalimantan, having exhausted the local forests, have started importing logs from Irian Jaya.

Irian Jaya is the largest untrammelled wilderness remaining in Southeast Asia. With Indonesia's notoriously ill-managed and corrupt timber industry which destroys at least 1 million hectares of rainforest annually, the fate of Irian Jaya's rainforest is in danger.

Already Indonesia has lost 52% of its forest to logging companies, transmigration and burning. Yet, attempts to stop the destruction of Indonesian rainforest so far have been very limited. The Department of Forestry estimated that in 1985 alone some 43 million hectares of forest were in need of urgent rehabilitation.

Today more than 60% of Irian Jaya's forests have been applied for as logging concessions. One of the largest of these projects is being set up by a specially formed company called PT Astra-Scott Cellulosa, a jointly owned



Irian Jaya (continued)

subsidiary of the Philadelphia based paper giant, Scott Paper, and Indonesia's second largest corporation PT Astra. This company has been granted concession to 790,000 hectares of land in the South of Irian Jaya.

The second largest concession has been given to Mamberamo Forest Products, a joint-venture between Asmus-McLean Limited, the Australian timber company based in Perth, and PT Sansaporindo Mandiri, Indonesia's corporation based in Jakarta. The company has been granted 600,000 hectares of prime forest in the North of Irian Jaya.

Without mentioning one by one each timber company operating in Irian Jaya today, it is clear that the Jakarta government's outrageous economic development schemes cannot be ignored. The greed must stop. Once again the voice of the innocent rainforest is calling. This time it comes from Irian Jaya.

Nyoto Sukmono.
Rainforest Information Centre.
P.O. Box 368.
Lismore NSW 2480.



INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT FLOODS HOMES OF VILLAGERS RESISTING EVICTION FROM KEDUNG OMBO DAM

Some 8,000 peasants from 3 villages in central Java are facing inundation of their homes and land from the waters of the World Bank financed Kedung Ombo dam.

The dam was officially opened on January 16th amidst protests from the villagers who remained in their homes even though the floodgates had been shut. The water level is rising fast and some villagers have already been forced to live on rafts and depend on those on higher ground for food.

UNFAIR COMPENSATION: WHAT YOU CAN DO.

The authorities tried to persuade the peasants to transmigrate, accept inadequate monetary compensation or unsuitable land. The World Bank's guidelines on the treatment of those forcibly ejected from their land by projects they have funded are not being followed. Please write to:

Barber B Conable President,
The World Bank
1818 H Street
Washington DC 20433 USA

Ask him to urge the Indonesian Government to halt the floodwaters until a just settlement is reached and accepted by the peasants and to insist the Indonesian government adheres to the World Bank guidelines on the resettlement of those forced to leave their land due to World Bank funded projects.

Thailand.

THE REPERCUSSIONS OF THAILAND'S LOGGING BAN

Protracted legal wranglings seem inevitable in the aftermath of Thailand's decision to ban logging. Timber Industry Association president Thawee Srisukul, who denied reports that the industry was preparing to derail the decrees in parliament, told the Far Eastern Economic Review that the concessionaires might seek redress in the courts. The Association comprises 47 provincial logging companies, which together hold 80% of the timber concessions outstanding.

Shortly after the flood disaster in the south, in which 350 people were killed, the government banned logging there. That prompted a protest by 8 of the 12 southern-based logging companies, who set a 15 February deadline for the government to pay an aggregate Baht 5.2 billion (US\$205.53 million) in damage or face legal action.

Timber Association sources said companies in other logging regions will try to strike a compromise with the government on compensation. However, a tough stance by Agriculture Minister Sanan Kachornprasart, who has threatened to check logging company books for possible tax violations, does not bode well for compromise any time soon.

One irony of the whole situation is that the Forestry Industry Association - a state enterprise under Sanan's control - is the single largest shareholder in the 47 companies, holding 32% of their shares.

Another area of concern is the economic impact of the ban. The Association says that about 1 million people depend on the timber industry for their livelihood.

Domestic consumption of timber products is estimated at 4 million cubic metres a year. About half came from concessions and the other half from old low-yield rubber trees and imports. Against reports that local timber prices have already shot up by 45-50%, the government has promised to accelerate negotiations for more imports from Southeast Asian suppliers - particularly Burma and Laos - to meet an expected shortage arising from the ban.

In his article about Thailand's decision to ban rainforest logging in World Rainforest Report 12, John Seed made the following observation: "...unless there is a decrease in the consumption of timber, this (decision) will

only increase the rate of destruction in Laos, Burma and Malaysia. Sooner or later we're going to have to face the unpopular fact that in order for any resource to be a renewable resource, we can only consume the interest, the increment, not the capital. If we are to have any future we cannot go on consuming more than nature can replace."

The accuracy of this statement is borne out by the fact that the Thai government has already made deals with all of its neighbours to import their logs. Vietnam with a forest cover of less than 19% and a flagging economy, can hardly help but meet the Thai demands. Laos, which has imposed a ban on log exports and permits only only exports of converted wood has asked Thailand to set up sawmills in Laos. Kampuchea, which has practically no virgin forest left but whose forestry department claims 75% forest cover, has agreed to export logs to Thailand. Karen rebels in nearby Burma are said to oppose Thai-Burmese logging deals and are reported to be laying land mines in wooded areas on the Thai border. The rebels say they will resist any export of logs unless approached directly by the Thai government. Thailand hopes to import more than 200,000 tonnes of timber annually from Burma's Shan and Karen states. Thai officials say they are considering log imports from Africa and Papua and New Guinea. Chris Elliot World Wildlife Fund's Conservation officer comments: "While the situation in Thailand has moved from an environmental to a human welfare issue, Thailand should not export its problems by simply meeting its timber needs from neighbouring countries without reducing its consumption. Other countries in Southeast Asia are likely to be forced to take similar measures in the future. For example the Philippines are now considering a logging ban. This makes it all the more important for Thailand to make decisions that are wise not only for itself but for its neighbours and thereby set an example for other countries in the region that may be forced to ban logging in the future."

SOURCES: FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW AND THE WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

Burma

Burma: The Military vs the Forest

A curious division exists in Burma, between the areas controlled by the military regime of Rangoon, which are losing tropical forest at a rate of 250,000 acres per year, and will be depleted of teak in five years,¹ and areas held by the Karen National Union, an ethnic minority group fighting a 40 year rebellion. Their Burma is still mostly wild; mountains of deciduous teak and southern monsoon forest, home to rich wildlife populations.

Neighbouring Thailand's nationwide ban on all internal logging has resulted in a scramble for logging deals in Laos and Burma. The Burmese regime is hungry for cash to fund its continued hold on power, and thus deals have been struck which sweep aside considerations of politics and human rights, and threaten the destruction of the largest intact tropical forest of mainland Asia.

Fighting is intense for the control of logging zones and transport lines. The Karen, whose homeland is along the southern Thai-Burmese border, have vowed to attack logging operations; the Burmese military are striking hard, to claim as much land as possible. Their tactics include forced labor, torture and shelling of villages.² 7,000 Karen villagers have fled to Thai border regions and the shelling has reportedly followed them.³ Other factions in the Teak War include the Burmese Communist Party and the Wa National Army. The heroin warlords of the north are reportedly striking deals for the transport of logs - and accompanying narcotics - through their area.

A further possibility is Thai military intervention. In remarks addressed to the Karens, Thai Army chief General Chavalit Yangchaiyudh said without elaborating, "It may not be right for the minority group to obstruct things that are beneficial to Thais."⁴ For the hasty profit of the military elites of two countries, Burma's magnificent forests, home to the Karen, may very soon become a thing of the past.

Summarised from a report by Project Maje, an independent Burma information service in the U.S.A.

SOURCES¹. National Geographic magazine, 19842. Amnesty International, Anti-Slavery Society et al.³. Nation newspaper, Bangkok, 24.1.19894. Bangkok Post, 15.2.1989

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP SAVE BURMA'S FORESTS:

Burmese military government until forest conservation, protection of the environment, and protection of indigenous forest people can be assured and verified.

Major General Chatichai Choonhavan Lt Col. Sanan Kachornprasat Prime Minister Minister of Agriculture Government House Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Nakhorn Pathom Road Ratchadamnoen Nok Avenue Bangkok 10300 THAILAND Bangkok 10200 THAILAND

Send copies of the letters to:

Mom Luang Thawisan Ladawan The Bangkok Post, Ms. Normita His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary U-Chuliang Building The Grand Palace Rama IV Road Na Phra Lan Road Bangkok 10500 THAILAND Bangkok 10200 THAILAND

and to Thailand's diplomatic representative in your country.

2. Write letters urging a suspension on import of all new hardwood products labelled "Made in Thailand", as they are products of deforestation in Thailand, Burma and Indochina. Send letters to:

Mr. Hajime Tamura and to your elected Minister of International Trade and Industry representative, Foreign The Cabinet Ministry or State Dept.2-3-1 Nagata Cho, Chiyoda-ku Tokyo 100 JAPAN

Send copies of the letters to: The Honourable Stephen J. Solarz, Chairman, House Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives 707 House Annex 1, Washington D.C. 20515 U.S.A.

3. Do not buy any new hardwood products labelled "Made In Thailand", the wood for these products comes from countries where the people cannot control the depletion of their forests.

4. Encourage your friends, family, colleagues, students, organizations, to take the actions listed above. Publicize the threat to Burma's forests.

PROJECT MAJE: Edith T. Mirante, 14 Dartmouth Rd, Cranford NJ 07016 U.S.A.

India

Project Arunachala

In the last issue of World Rainforest Report an article appeared about the Rainforest Information Centre's involvement in a reafforestation project in southern India. Mount Arunachala, Tamil Nadu, is the focal point of the project. Worshipped as an embodiment of spiritual strength and power by people in India and overseas, it is the resting place of many sages, most notably Sri Ramana.

Although this area has always been dry, it was not so long ago that tigers were frequently seen in the forested areas at the base of the mountain. Nowadays a chronic water shortage has reached life-threatening proportions. At least three nurseries totally self-managed by local people are envisaged to supply a comprehensive agroforestry project on a permaculture basis. This would eventually satisfy all local needs for fuel and food. To complement the eco-restoration programmes, a core environmental education centre is planned. It will act as an independent campus with a nursery and demonstration site which can develop as it co-ordinates the practical projects of reforestation, agroforestry, watershed management, erosion control, alternative and sustainable energy, organic agriculture, and a seed collection, storage and distribution service.

Government lands have been offered by local officials for the setting up of nurseries but it is felt that that such a centre should be independent. It is envisaged that three acres will be acquired and registered in the name of the Annamalai Reforestation Society adjacent to government lands where the first experimental plantings can begin. It will be seven to ten years before sustainable tree cropping patterns can be established and proven fully effective amongst the wider local population. Thus it is seen as essential to establish a concentrated successful permanent demonstration site that can inspire and instruct as soon as possible.

Over the past six months, much activity has been generated at Arunachala. The Annamalai Reforestation Society has been registered and is functioning to co-ordinate activities. Local women and children have been collecting seeds in a sanctuary some 30 kilometres south of the mountain and in the small forest area that remains at the base of Arunachala. Sorting, cleaning and bottling seeds is continuing while a small nursery has begun in the area. Work has been carried out

on an environmental history of the hill and its surroundings, from sifting through records, asking questions in the community, and interviewing the elderly. A survey has been conducted on the present usage of the hill, including grass cutting, wood cutting and

grazing, with a view to exploring alternative possibilities for the persons engaged in these practices. So far it has been found, that only 150 persons are deriving their livelihoods from the hill, and all but the old people claimed to prefer alternative employment on reforestation work if possible.



Another aspect of the project is the need for community networking and education. Puppet workshops and performances have been taking place all year. Puppet theatre is a wonderful medium to work with in India with its large audiences. At the moment three adults and seven children are actively involved performing a rich piece of theatre which introduces the subject of the local environmental problems and needs. A video of the show has been taped and has been shown to thousands of school-children and teachers working on raising environmental awareness.

India ...Arunachala (cont'd)

Five Tamil youths are training in nursery management at the Pitchandikulam Forest in nearby Auroville. With assistance from people who have been working on green projects in the region for over 20 years, expert training will continue at Auroville until enough local people can start training at Project Arunachala. A close working relationship will be maintained with other groups in the region working on similar projects.

Later in the year four volunteers will be going to India to assist the Annamalai Reforestation Society in planning the detailed programme for the afforestation of Arunachala mountain and the related forestry programmes. Two of the volunteers will be also trained in Permaculture Design, while assistance will also be incorporated into the community and educational programme collaborating on puppet theatre, slide presentations, books and pamphlets relating to the environmental issues on a local, national and international level.

We are hoping to raise funds to purchase the three acres of land needed for the Core Environment Centre and initial large nursery. This is needed as soon as possible. Also, at approximately \$50 per month over a three month period, training can keep continuing for local Tamils. Donations are needed to guarantee the success of this far reaching restoration project. You can help by sending any monies to the Rainforest Information Centre, P.O Box 368, Lismore, N.S.W 2480. For tax deductible donations send via the Australian Conservation Foundation, 672B Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn, Victoria. 3122, clearly stating that your donation be directed towards Project Arunachala.

THE WORLD BANK UPDATE

Continued from page 19

who will be displaced by this dam. There have been massive ongoing protests at the dam site by local populations protesting absence of a coherent resettlement plan. The environmental impact of the dam has still not been assessed.

The situation is also grim for the 20,000 people who are being displaced by the Bank-financed Kedung Ombo dam in Java, Indonesia. The Indonesian Government over the past four years has attempted to force affected people into Transmigration sites on the outer islands. On January 16th, with more than 6000 people still living on the reservoir site, the reservoir started filling. As the waters have risen,

many are now living in makeshift shelters in surrounding forest areas, and their health and safety is a matter of major concern.

THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK BANKING ON DISASTERS.

The World Bank is not the only financial institution with a dismal record. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), will be able to lend US\$22.5 billion over the next four years. Unless major institutional changes are made within the IDB, the conflict between increased pressure to lend and environmental quality will become even more acute than in the World Bank. Within the IDB, there has been some progress in dealings with certain projects, but with limited environmental staff and lack of policy guidelines on critical issues, a number of projects will be social and ecological debacles. In Uruguay, Ecuador and Venezuela the IDB is funding projects without adequate attention to their social and environmental effects with disastrous results.

As the greenhouse effect, toxic waste and ozone depletion come public awareness, environmental activism is increasing on an unprecedented level. Nowhere is this struggle more acute than in the Third World where huge numbers of people's daily survival is dependent on sustainable management and conservation of forests and land. It is vital that the MDB's commit or recommit themselves to sweeping reforms in their loan packages. Increasing the participation of local communities and NGO's in the selection, design, and implementation of development projects is the best way of ensuring they are economically and ecologically feasible.

Increased monitoring of the environmental impact of projects and debt reduction are urgently needed as means of encouraging sustainable development. The World Bank and other MDB's need to take swift, decisive action that will deal with deforestation and other environmental problems. The lives of millions and ultimately the fate of the entire earth depend on it.

For further information on specific projects, contact the Rainforest Information Centre.



Brazil

LATIN INTELLECTUALS DEMAND THAT SARNEY CONTROL THE DESTRUCTION OF THE AMAZON

Mexico: A hundred Latin American intellectuals of renown including Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Carlos Fuentes, Juan Carlos Onetti, Mario Vargas Llosa and Isabel Allende, have written to the Brazilian president, Jose Sarney declaring that protection of the Amazonian forest must be placed above any national interest. "Ecocide and genocide cannot be justified by patriotic rhetoric. In Brazil as much as in any other part of the world they are barbaric acts. To invoke national sovereignty in order to justify crimes against nature seems to us puerile and dishonest.", the "group of hundred" insists in a two page letter sent yesterday to Sarney and deposited at the Brazilian Embassy in Mexico. "We believe that the historical responsibility for the destruction of the Amazon is enormous, and the future Latin American generations will not forgive us if we don't do what is in our power.", the signatories state. They also advocate the creation of an international tribunal which would judge the "ecocide" which is taking place in Latin America. Sarney has said on various occasions that the economic development of the Amazon is more important than the preservation of the environment. The letter accuses the Brazilian Government of promoting deforestation and the extermination of the indigenous people of the region in collaboration with multinational enterprises.

SOURCE; "EXTRA INFORMATIVO",
SYDNEY 25 APRIL 1989



THE POLITICS OF NUMBERS: AMAZON DEFORESTATION

The Brazilian Institute for Spacial Research (INPE) last week concluded a report in which it admitted having underestimated the amount of deforestation of the Amazon previously calculated in its study of 6 April of this year. According to the new estimates, the total deforestation is 343,9 thousand sq. km., or 92.5 thousand sq. km. more than its previous estimate, totalling 9.3% of the Amazon forest (as opposed to 5.12% as previously claimed). The vice-director of INPE declared that the figure of 5.12% is "the most unfortunate thing INPE has done", and that the differences were due to methodological errors such as excluding from the calculation large areas of forest destroyed before the 1960s, not taking into account the destruction of cerrados due to "lack of time and technical difficulties", and calculating the percentage of deforestation on by dividing the area devastated by the total surface area of Legal Amazonia (instead of the surface area covered by forest). These "errors" appear to have had political motives since the low estimate of deforestation was used by the Sarney government to counter international pressures. Early this year, President Sarney had commissioned INPE to complete the study of deforestation within a month in order to use it as a basis for a counter-offensive to the criticisms of the "Our Nature" Program, the government's official environmental program. (Source: CEDI)



OSMARINO AMANCIO, RUBBER TAPPERS' LEADER, IN DANGER OF BEING MURDERED AT ANY MOMENT BY LANDOWNERS' GUNMEN

Osmarino, the rubber tappers' leader of Brasilea is receiving daily death threats from the same gang of big landowners responsible for killing Chico Mendes (Dec.22,1988).

Violence by the landowners and their main organization (UDR) in the region is increasing drastically. Their leaders in Brasilea gather at the police station where Mendes killer is held. Alvarino Alves, a participant in Mende's slaying, is still at large. Authorities have shown no interest in arresting him. Osmarino's home was surrounded by mounted thugs and later 3 shots were fired into it. With the end of the rainy season now immanent rubber tappers are preparing to take direct action to stop deforestation. International support is needed to ensure that no more peasants are murdered, write to:

President Jose Sarney Palacio do Planal to
Brasilia DF Brasil telex 613117 PRDF BR

Minister of Justice Oscar Dias Correa
Ministerio da Justica Brasilia DF Brasil telex
611088 MNJU BR

Federal Police Director Delegado Romeu Tuma
Policia Federal Brasilia DF Brasil telex
611461 DPFEB BR



The R.I.C. received the following, and would like to hear from anyone who has more information on this subject.

Brazil is planning to aerial spray DDT in order to eradicate malaria carrying mosquitos in the Amazon basin. This project is being funded by the World Bank and the government of Brazil. This is due to take place in a few weeks time.

Does anybody have any more information about this? What plans are there to stop this?

This information was gathered from a BBC radio broadcast.

CIMI ORGANIZES FIRST MEETING OF INDIAN LEADERS OF THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON

From a meeting of Indian leaders from throughout the Brazilian Amazon held in April at Manaus, a Commission of Indigenous Organizations was formed.

The leaders declared : "we believe in the articulation of indigenous peoples principally in the Amazon, with the working class, riverine people, fishermen, rubber-tappers, and popular institutions, will strengthen our struggles...the Indigenous Nations in the Amazon region have witnessed aggressions to the environment by Federal, State, and Municipal governments, linked to mining companies, highway constructors, hydroelectric dams, airports, lumber firms and ranches, are the true enemies of nature principally the environment and have no commitment to Nature and Indigenous Nations...(Source: Final Report, First Meeting)



HOW BRAZIL SUBSIDISES THE DESTRUCTION OF THE AMAZON

Why is Brazil losing its tropical rainforest at such an alarming rate? Surprisingly, not because it benefits by cutting the Amazon down.

Brazil has a comparatively low population density and plenty of good farmland. Why then do settlers rush to the Amazon where land is poor and farm incomes meagre?

The answer according to Mr. Hans Binswanger, an economist at the World Bank, is that Brazil's laws and tax system make deforestation and ranching in the Amazon artificially profitable. Such ranching loses money in many types of pasture. In the Amazon where the soil is unsuitable for permanent cultivation, it is especially loss-making. Brazil's implicit fiscal subsidy for livestock ranches between 1975 and 1986 has been estimated at over \$1 billion. This represents the biggest known subsidy in history for ecological destruction, unrelieved by economic gain.

Brazil has encouraged deforestation in many ways:

- *Its prodigal fiscal and monetary policies mean that inflation is high and unstable (last year prices rose 933%). No-one saves money as cash and Brazilians find it safer to invest in land. This pushes up land prices and makes land speculation a safe, self-fulfilling bet.

- *The government has virtually exempted agriculture from taxes. Businessmen therefore buy farmland, misdeclare business income as farm income, and escape taxes. Using land as a tax haven is more profitable than farming it, so farmers are bought out by businessmen.

- *A land tax on farm holdings is levied on unimproved land but is reduced by up to 90% on land used for crops or pasture. Forest are fully taxed as unimproved land. So trees are cut down to save on tax.

- *Tax credits of up to 75% of their cash value is given on approved investments.

So even if ranches are incurring a net loss they may still be profitable to businessmen. The rich benefit most from tax credits, so the scheme amounts to a subsidy from all taxpayers to the rich to cut down the rainforests.

- *The government subsidises rural credit. Livestock accounts for 20% of total credit, and all approved ranches are eligible

for such loans. This encourages ranching and therefore deforestation.

- *Federal and state laws on squatters' rights have become perverse disincentives for conservation. "Effective" use of public land entitles squatters to usage rights and after 5 years gives them ownership rights.

- *There are few forest guards (in the western Amazon one guard is supposed to look after an area the size of France); they have few jeeps let alone boats or helicopters. Laws are easily evaded by bribing guards.

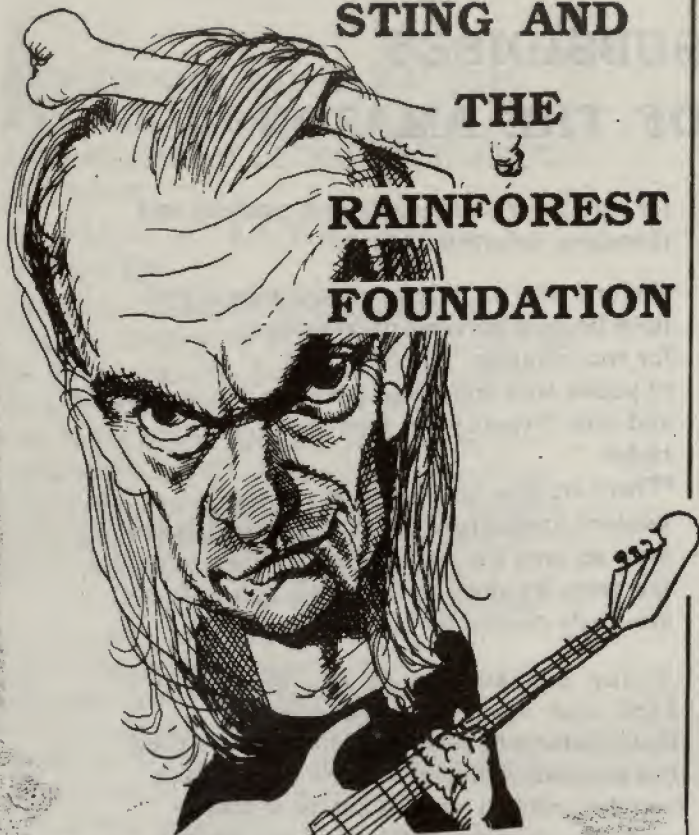
Under pressure from the World Bank and environmentalists these distortions have been formally reduced. But implementation of the new rules is poor and the problem remains almost as bad as ever. The solutions to the problem are clear though hard. Brazil should tighten its fiscal and monetary policies so that investment in financial securities becomes more attractive than investment in land. Tax exemption for agriculture needs to be phased out so that farmland is no longer used as a tax shelter. Land taxes in the forest need to be reduced so that conservation is encouraged. Tax credits for farming and ranching should be revoked. Rural credit subsidies should also go. Squatters rights should be limited to perhaps 100 hectares rather than 3,000. A ceiling should be put on corporate holdings in the forest. Forest guards should be given a share of all fines in order to give an incentive to catch law breakers rather than accept bribes. Clearly these are tall orders, but there is one heartening conclusion in Mr. Binswanger's analysis, and that is that even in Brazil's short term interest it makes no sense to continue destroying the forest. If Brazil's government can harm its own interests by handing out tax breaks to encourage something that would not otherwise occur, then should surely be possible for it to benefit both itself and the rest of humanity by taking those tax breaks away.

- THE ECONOMIST MARCH 18 1989



STING AND

THE RAINFOREST FOUNDATION



British rock star Sting and tribal leaders are campaigning world wide to raise funds and public awareness for the preservation of a large area of rainforest in Brazil. The project is called Fundacao Mata Virgem. Its initial objectives are:

Demarcation of the Mekrognoti indigenous area of about 5 million hectares.

Demarcation of the Xingu National Park, Gorototire and Bau Indigenous areas. Demarcation entails the use of natural boundaries, markers and "boundary" stations run by Indian rangers. This approach in most cases eliminates the need to cut boundary lines through the forest. The creation of buffer zones and a maintenance plan for ongoing protection is now underway. An international tour including Sting, two tribal leaders and film maker J-P Dutilleul, who has been involved in trying to save the lands of the Kayapo tribe since 1973, began in France in April this year and went to Europe, the US, Japan and Australia.

Sting: "We feel that if we can succeed, the preserve could stand as a light house. We support all efforts to protect indigenous people and their environment in the rainforest. But, we can only do one thing at a time."

\$1 million is needed urgently to save the Xingu-the world's largest national park, before the burning starts again in July. \$1 can save 1 hectare of Amazon rainforest. Please rush your donations to: Rainforest Foundation (Australia) PO Box 123 Palm Beach NSW 2108. Ph 02 9188388

BRAZIL

NEW PRODUCTS WITH A CAUSE: SAVING BRAZIL'S FORESTS ?

Academic studies have shown that a living forest can produce more than one cleared for farming or ranching says Jason Clay of the human rights group Cultural Survival. "Now it's time to start testing that claim in the marketplace".

icecreams with "Amazon" flavours, snacks, suntan oils, facial scrubs and condoms. The intention is to buy directly from producers and eliminate unscrupulous intermediaries. "Acre's future depends on an extractive economy" says Jorge Neves, research director at the State Planning and Development Agency there. He applauded the rainforest marketing scheme.

Editorial note: While any alternative is preferable to the clearing of rainforest, the extent of the damage done to the forest by extractive schemes such as this one is unclear. Anyone intending to buy such products in the belief that they are helping to save rainforest would be well advised to check their facts first. Further information about this would be welcomed by WRR.



In the November 5, 1988 issue of The Economist (volume 309, number 7575), a letter on page 4 entitled "The Vanishing Jungle" discusses the experiences of a company trying to be responsible while developing the jungle. The letter goes on to state that when they approached financial institutions for money, they were refused. The reasons given were "Cultural difficulties", "selected felling is a new technology" and "Sustained management and selected felling does not provide a quick enough return on investment". The person writing the letter goes on to state that timber operators, cultivators, and local industry should not be blamed for destruction when they must conform to the bank's ideas of management in order to raise the capital. Even if a company were willing to forbear from developing the jungle in this unwise fashion, someone else would be waiting to step in and make a quick buck, with no care for future generations.

-- Kim L. Toms

Nicaragua

Rainforest Growing Back after "Joa "

Nicaraguan Rainforest Regenerating Well after Hurricane

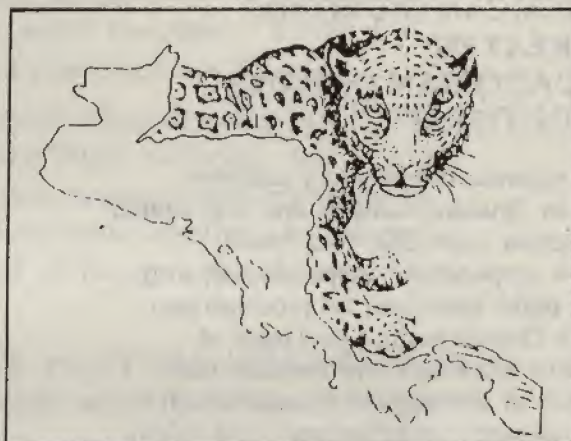
An international expedition to the rainforests of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua has found that they appear to be growing back well, despite suffering heavy damage from Hurricane Joa last October.

The nine-person study team reported on their findings to the Regional Government of the South Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS) in Bluefields in late February. The expedition, consisting of 4 Nicaraguans, 3 North Americans, 1 Dutch and 1 Costa Rican, spent two weeks gathering data in the hurricane-damaged forest.

According to their preliminary report, damage was fully as severe as originally estimated, with 81 % of adult trees being blown over or snapped off. However the great majority of these have resprouted, and 77 % of the individual trees continue to grow despite the hurricane's severe effects. No extinctions of tree species appear to have occurred as a result of the hurricane, with 98 % of the species showing regrowth and about 35 % having produced new seedlings. Bird populations, however, seem to have diminished drastically.

Contrary to expectations, the regeneration is dominated by primary rainforest species rather than the second-growth "pioneers" which generally invade rainforest after logging or clearing. Indeed such valuable timber species as almendro (*Dipteryx panamensis*) and sangregado (*Pterocarpus officinale*) seem to have survived the hurricane particularly well.

The expedition recommended using technologies such as portable sawmills, charcoal production, and extraction using boats and oxen, to take out and process the fallen timber. Their report was firmly opposed to bringing in heavy machinery to haul out the fallen trees, because it would compact the fragile rainforest soil and could permanently damage its regenerative capacity. The report also emphasized the danger of fire during the latter part of the dry season (March to May). It praised the fire control plan being implemented by Nicaraguan agencies, and warned that a large fire in the area could



cause even more damage than did the hurricane.

Efforts to use the fallen timber for reconstruction have already begun. A portable sawmill donated by the American group APSNICA is already functioning in Pearl Lagoon, and 16 more will arrive in the region shortly, donated by the Swedish church group Diakonaia.

The unique phenomenon of the hurricane striking a large area of rainforest makes the area extremely important for scientists from all over the world, said the report. Permanent plots have been established to allow long-term studies of forest regeneration, and the members of the expedition are seeking international collaboration in ongoing ecological studies.

The area, which is part of the largest remaining forest in Central America, is also important because of the plans for the International Peace Park, SIAPAZ, along the Nicaraguan-Costa Rica border immediately to the south.

The expedition was organized by the Nicaraguan Center for Research and Documentation of the Atlantic Coast (CIDCA), and funded by a grant from Oxfam America. A final report is expected by May, and other publications and audio-visual presentations will also be prepared.

For further information, contact Doug Boucher at (301) 942-6535, or by e-mail at PeaceNet address "dboucher".

Ecuador



AMERICAN OIL ROADS THREATEN ECUADORIAN INDIANS, RAINFOREST

Despite vigorous objections by rainforest activists in Ecuador, Canada and the United States [Action Alert 26], two North American corporations are proceeding with plans to build roads and oil pipelines into Ecuador's Oriente basin, a vast tract of Amazonian rainforest that includes the homelands of Ecuador's last uncontacted indigenous people, the Huaorani, and what was heretofore its largest area of protected rainforest, Yasuni National Park.

Historically, such roads have provided easy access for rapid colonization and wholesale destruction of tropical rainforest by landless farming families, cattle ranchers, and land speculators. The alternative is to use helicopters to bring in supplies and equipment.

But Petro-Canada Resources, of Calgary, Alberta, and Conoco Ecuador Ltd., a subsidiary of the Wilmington, Delaware-based Dupont Corporation, have rejected requests that they build their pipelines and oil-exploration sites by air.

At the same time, the two companies have refused to take responsibility for protecting the area from colonization, despite an admission by Peter Kaye, Petro-Canada's Senior Vice-President for Exploration, that colonists began settling near the PC exploration site even before road construction started last January, and settlement has increased since then.

According to Kaye, "Petro-Canada has no authority to enforce a blockade of the road. That is the responsibility of the government of Ecuador."

Kaye says that Petro-Canada made an "official request" that CEPE, the Ecuadorian national corporation overseeing oil development, close the road to colonists, but admits that CEPE has shown no inclination to do so.

Kaye says that PC did build a gate, but colonists simply waited till night and sneaked around it. "I don't know how you can stop colonization short of violence," Kaye said.

Likewise, Conoco, which is building two major roads within Yasuni National Park, two pipelines, several oil holding tanks, and a network of subsidiary roads to link what will be an estimated 100 oil wells, has for the most part dumped the job of protection into the government's lap.

According to Conoco President Edward J. Davies, Conoco has "submitted a detailed plan" for National Park guard stations at the entrance and exit to the Conoco site.

However, a representative of the Ecuadorian environmental group Tierra Viva dismissed this as window-dressing: "The colonists are very poor, very desperate, very tough people. And they are armed. They will not be stopped by a couple of park rangers, and once they are in place, nothing short of military intervention will get them out."

What You Can Do: Write to Edgar Woolard, president of E.I. Dupont, Inc., one of the most powerful corporations on the planet. Send a copy to Conoco's Edward J. Davies, and write a similar letter to Petro-Canada Chairman Wilbert Hopper. (Remember that PC is exploring in the greater Oriente basin, not Yasuni National Park.)

Edgar Woolard, President and CEO, E.I. Dupont, Inc. 1007 Market Street, Wilmington, DE 19898

THE RAINFOREST INFORMATION CENTRE IN ECUADOR

The project to plant a vast buffer zone of perennial fruit orchards and mixed native species around the Awa people's pristine rainforest has been described in previous World Rainforest Reports (WRR's 11 and 12). Further funds are urgently needed, particularly to employ more young workers with a sound local knowledge. It is these workers who will ultimately keep the project going with entirely local enterprise. Funds can be sent to R.I.C. with a request that they be used for the project in Ecuador.

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